

Spiced Just Right

om ajnana timirandhasya jnananjana salakaya
caksur unmilitam yena tasmai sri guruve namah

vancha kalpa tarubhyas ca krpa sindhubhya eva ca
patitanam pavenebhyo vaishnavebhyo namo namah

Chanting japa can be likened to preparing an offering of bhoga for the Lord. While the common linguistic trait is to say 'I'm going to make some prasad' actually *you* are preparing bhoga, offering it nicely and by Krsna's loving glance it becomes prasad. Similarly we think that we are 'chanting Hare Krsna' whereas actually we are offering our time, our minds, our breath, our body, our words, our hearts and ultimately our very selves.

On the amorous altar of afflicted, emotive devotion we are ringing the sweetly sonorous bell of the holy name. The cadence of Bhakti awakens one to Krsna's supraexistent reality and when we are receptive, attentive and acquisitive He condescends to direct audience, dancing jubilantly on the tongue of the sincere sadhaka.

The chanting of ones japa each day is a Yajna - a sacrificial offering to the holy name. When we offer prasad we certainly don't start offering in the morning, 'namah om visnu...' then do something else 'padaya krsna presthaya...' then when we get back from work 'bhutale srimate...' NO we make the full offering because we are hungry for the Prasad. If we actually realised our starved position then we would be similarly hungry for the Prasad of the holy name. The offering is bhoga and the transcendental transformative process spiritualizes the matter. So we should endeavour to offer our japa properly then we will taste the 'mercy' and feel somewhat satiated by it's generative force, as we do when we honor prasad - actually there is no difference...

In all cases it's the mood in which we implement Bhakti that's important. Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati compared the holy name to a capsule of medicine, the capsule is not the medicine, that is contained within. However, there may be different compounds within different capsules, despite the fact they may look similar. One capsule may contain medicine another cyanide!

"The holy name must be surcharged with the proper spirit, not any mundane sentiment."

Bhaktisiddhanta Sarasvati Thakura

When the laboratory is top-notch the medicine produced is very powerful; we must be like scientists of the heart - refining our chanting so as to charm the Lord and make advancement in His service. Krsna's name is also Guru, we are not the masters of Nama. Only with love can Krsna be controlled and when He becomes attached to us, we will experience superabounding nectarean flavours in tasty union with and separation from Him.

So the offering must be prepared just right, with nice ingreedyments lovingly combined and spiced just right with choice disposition and heartfelt humours. When our japa is thus 'spiced just right', the sweet name will blissfully bestow pakka Prasad in superfluity and we will be fit to burst with Krsna Consciousness.

Hare Krsna Hare Krsna Krsna Krsna Hare Hare
Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare

aparadha-sahasrani, kriyante 'har-nisam maya
daso 'ham iti mam matva, ksamasva madhusudana